
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION TO REDUCE RELIANCE ON
STANDARDIZED TESTING AND STRIVE TOWARDS A DIFFERENT METHOD
OF MEASURING ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

1 WHEREAS, our nation's future well-being relies on a high-
2 quality public education system that prepares all students for
3 college, careers, citizenship, and lifelong learning, and
4 strengthens the nation's social and economic well-being; and
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6 WHEREAS, our nation's school systems spend growing amounts
7 of time, money, and energy on high-stakes standardized testing,
8 in which student performance on standardized tests is used to
9 make major decisions affecting individual students, educators,
10 and schools; and
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12 WHEREAS, the No Child Left Behind Act reauthorization of
13 the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides
14 statewide standardized testing requirements for all public
15 schools receiving federal funding; and
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17 WHEREAS, the Hawaii Department of Education and the United
18 States Department of Education reached an Elementary and
19 Secondary Education Act flexibility agreement to change the
20 calculation of participation and the consequences of low test
21 participation; and
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23 WHEREAS, this flexibility agreement considers schools with
24 less than ninety-five percent of students participating in
25 standardized testing as out of compliance; and
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27 WHEREAS, if the State fails to comply with this ninety-five
28 percent rate of testing, Hawaii may jeopardize federal funds
29 connected with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act; and
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1 WHEREAS, in 2007, twenty-eight percent of the nation's
2 schools failed to make the required annual yearly progress
3 prompting the United States Department of Education to offer the
4 states Elementary and Secondary Education Act flexibility
5 agreements; and
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7 WHEREAS, by 2011, that number had risen to thirty-eight
8 percent and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan warned that
9 eighty-two percent of schools may be failing to make annual
10 yearly progress by the end of 2011 if Congress did not amend the
11 No Child Left Behind Act; and
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13 WHEREAS, in spite of the large number of schools that were
14 out of compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act, the lack of
15 compliance did not cause any state to lose its federal education
16 funding; and
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18 WHEREAS, the State is transitioning to the Smarter Balanced
19 Assessments Program, to be implemented in Spring 2015, for
20 mathematics and English language arts, in which students will be
21 required to support their answers and show how they apply their
22 knowledge, although science will continue to be a criterion-
23 referenced assessment; and
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25 WHEREAS, Hawaii continues to administer end-of-course exams
26 that are statewide multiple choice and constructed response
27 question assessments given in the final weeks of a course in
28 algebra I, algebra II, biology I, expository writing I, and
29 United States history; and
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31 WHEREAS, although, in 2013, the State of Hawaii received
32 flexibility from the United States Department of Education
33 regarding certain specific requirements of the No Child Left
34 Behind Act, high-stakes standardized testing continues to be
35 prevalent throughout Hawaii and the United States; and
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37 WHEREAS there is a vibrant, growing, diverse, and
38 bipartisan movement to opt out of high stakes testing led by
39 students, parents, teachers, administrators, organizations such
40 as the National Center for Fair & Open Testing and United Opt
41 Out National, and many others; and
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1 WHEREAS, the overreliance on high-stakes standardized
2 testing in state and federal accountability systems undermines
3 educational quality and equity in United States public schools
4 by hampering educators' efforts to focus on the broad range of
5 learning experiences that promote the innovation, creativity,
6 problem solving, collaboration, communication, critical
7 thinking, and deep subject-matter knowledge that will allow
8 students to thrive in a democracy and an increasingly global
9 society and economy; and

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11 WHEREAS, it is widely recognized that standardized testing
12 is an inadequate and often unreliable measure of student
13 learning and educator effectiveness; and

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15 WHEREAS, the over-emphasis on standardized testing has
16 caused considerable collateral damage in many public schools,
17 including narrowing the curriculum, teaching to the test,
18 reducing love of learning, pushing students out of school,
19 driving teachers out of the profession, and undermining school
20 climate; and

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22 WHEREAS, high-stakes standardized testing has negative
23 effects for students from all backgrounds, especially low-income
24 students, English language learners, children of color, and
25 those with disabilities; and

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27 WHEREAS, the culture and structure of the systems in which
28 students learn must change in order to foster engaging school
29 experiences that promote joy in learning, depth of thought, and
30 breadth of knowledge for students; now, therefore,

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32 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
33 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015, the
34 House of Representatives concurring, that the Hawaii Board of
35 Education is requested to reduce reliance on standardized
36 testing and strive towards a different method of measuring
37 accountability in the education system; and

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39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Congress and
40 Executive Branch are urged to overhaul the Elementary and
41 Secondary Education Act, known as the No Child Left Behind Act,
42 reduce the testing mandates, promote multiple forms of evidence



1 of student learning and school quality in accountability, and
2 not mandate any fixed role for the use of student test scores in
3 evaluating educators; and
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii Board of Education
6 is requested to reexamine public school accountability systems
7 and develop a system based on multiple forms of assessment that
8 does not require extensive standardized testing, more accurately
9 reflects the broad range of student learning, supports students,
10 and improves schools; and
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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
13 requested to inform parents about the purpose, potential impact,
14 and protocol of any standardized test that a student is expected
15 to take; including all rights related to test administration,
16 participation, and non-participation, as well as available
17 supports based on accompanying reports that identify areas of
18 strength and improvement; and
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20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
21 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Speaker of the
22 United States House of Representatives, Majority Leader of the
23 United States Senate, Secretary of the United States Department
24 of Education, members of Hawaii's congressional delegation,
25 members of the Board of Education, and the Superintendent of
26 Education.

